

Institute of Medical Molecular Biotechnology Newsletter



UNIVERSITI
TEKNOLOGI
MARA

Institut
Bioteknologi
Perubatan
Molekul

Issue 33 | July 2023 | <https://immb.uitm.edu.my/>

FIRST SYMPOSIUM ON TICKS AND TICK-BORNE DISEASES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

Congratulations to Master's student, **Abdul Rahman Kazim**, who was supervised by **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Heo Chong Chin**. Mr. Abdul Rahman was invited as a guest speaker for the 1st **Symposium on Ticks and Tick-Borne Diseases in Southeast Asia** in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The symposium was held on the 22nd and 23rd of June by the **Institut Pasteur du Cambodge (IPC)**, in collaboration with the **Royal University of Agriculture, Cambodia (RUA)**. Mr. Abdul Rahman shared his expertise on the topic entitled **"Ticks and Tick-Borne Diseases in Malaysia: What We Know So Far."** During his presentation, he explained about the brief history of ticks, and studies on tick-borne diseases in Malaysia while also highlighting the causes of their decline. This talk was successfully attended by participants from Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, Japan, Singapore, and Indonesia and was spearheaded by Dr. Sebastien Boyer of the Institut Pasteur du Cambodge. Abdul Rahman had a chance to discuss potential collaborative projects with experts from other countries and was also offered the opportunity to examine tick specimens in the IPC entomology laboratory, where several new records were discovered in both Cambodia and Laos.



VISIT FROM THE HEAD OF THE MALARIA RESEARCH CENTRE OF UNIMAS on 9th June 2023.

IMMB is proud to received **Dr. Paul Cliff Simon Divis**, the **Head of the Malaria Research Centre at UNIMAS**. Joining him on the visit were **Ts. Dr. Nur Aliana Hidayah Mohamed**, the **Head of the Centre of Postgraduate Studies, Faculty of Dentistry UiTM**, along with her student, **Muhammad Mirza Ariffin**. They were warmly welcomed and then taken on a tour by the **IMMB Director, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Heo Chong Chin**. Throughout their visit, they had the opportunity to learn about our activities, facilities, and research environment at IMMB.

The **IMMB INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ADVISOR MEETING 2023** was conducted on 7th June 2023. During these two meetings, the IMMB director has presented the progress of IMMB, which includes activities, achievements, future planning, and SWOT analysis. Four Internal advisors who had attended, namely **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Thuhairah Hasrah Abd Rahman**, **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Siti Hamimah Syeikh Abd Kadir**, **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jamal Housaini**, and **Dr. Noor Fahitah Abu Haniapah**, they had the opportunity to discuss, and provide input for the progress of IMMB. Among the inputs discussed were those related to international short-term attachment opportunities and potential services. The external advisory meeting was also held in the evening and was attended by four advisors, namely **Prof. Dr. Hoh Boon Peng**, **Prof. Dr. Dennis Tappe**, **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Low Teck Yew**, and **Dr. Paola A. Magni**. The matter that was discussed during this meeting was the need for IMMB to be more involved in the bioinformatics field to support future services apart from serving as a center of infectious diseases through the involvement of more clinicians. All advisors were satisfied with IMMB's achievements so far, especially in increasing its visibility.

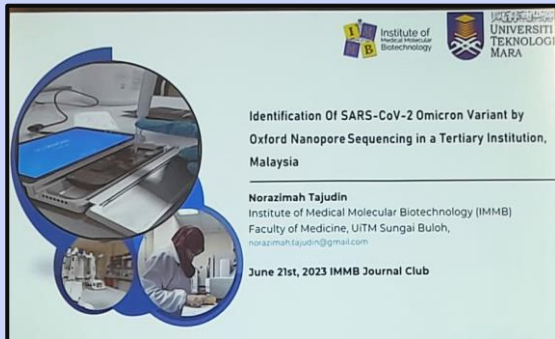


IMMB Journal Club was conducted on 14th June 2023. The invited speaker was **Ms. Hala Abulehia** (PhD Student). She is under the supervision of **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Noor Shafina Mohd Nor**. In her talk, she shared her research finding on **"The Effects of Trans Fat Diet (TFD) Intake on Metabolic Parameters and DNA methylation Profile in Offspring of In-utero BPA Exposed Rats"**. This talk was chaired by Ms Siti Aisyah Mokhtar and was attended by 20 participants.

ACTIVITIES, INITIATIVES & INVOLVEMENT



A successful **Townhall session** with the IMMB director, was conducted over two days. The first session took place online on 19th June 2023, engaging lecturers and supervisors, while the subsequent day, on 20th June 2023, a face-to-face session was held in IMMB with the participation of IMMB users, comprising of postgraduate students, research assistants, and industrial training students, with a total attendance of 23 individuals. The purpose of the town hall sessions was to discuss various matters related to IMMB. It began with welcoming remarks, followed by updates on the recent activities and developments at IMMB. Additionally, a Q&A session was held to address any questions or concerns. Prior to the session, supervisors and users had the opportunity to submit their opinions, views, and questions about IMMB through a Google form. Each question was answered by the director and his team. The townhall session will be a bi-annual event, serving as an opportunity for IMMB users to get to know and interact with the IMMB management. It allows for open communication and feedback, leading to greater understanding among all stakeholders involved.



The **IMMB Journal Club** was conducted on 21st June 2023. The invited speaker was **Norazimah Tajudin**, an MSc student who is under the supervision of **Dr. Siti Farah Alwani Mohd Nawi**. In this talk, she shared with the audience the topic entitled "**Identification of SARS-CoV-2 Omicron Variant by Oxford Nanopore Sequencing in a Tertiary Institution, Malaysia.**" Apart from providing updates on COVID and the initial results of her study, she also discussed the advantages of the nanopore device. For example, during sequencing, users can add more flow cells without stopping or interfering with current runs if they discover that their sample quality is poor or insufficient. The talk was chaired by Ms. Siti Aisyah Mokhtar and was attended by 19 participants.

2D PROTEOMICS WORKSHOP. Mr. Mohd Yusri, an officer from IMMB, was invited as the principal trainer for the workshop, which was held at the **Sultan Ahmad Shah Medical Centre, IIUM Kuantan** from 14th-17th June 2023. This workshop was attended by two medical doctors and two medical laboratory technologists, led by **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bahiyah Bakrim**, who is a medical lecturer studying prolonged COVID, obesity, and Alzheimer's. Aside from emphasizing on hands-on training, participants also had the opportunity to discuss and receive consultations regarding their ongoing experiments. Through inter-institutional programs like these, invaluable opportunities to enrich staff knowledge and expertise can be provided. Staff can also challenge themselves to adapt to different environments and work cultures. Furthermore, such collaborative programs encourage the exchange of knowledge, ultimately leading to the generation of fresh ideas. We are excited and eagerly anticipate more invitations and collaborations in the future, as they greatly contribute to the professional development of our members.



MSc VIVA VOCE. Congratulations to **Raja Nur Firzanah Syaza binti Raja Sharin**, who is under the supervision of **Dr. Wan Nor Izzah Wan Mohamad Zain**, for successfully passing her **MSc VIVA VOCE (MD780)** on 6th June 2023. Her MSc research title is "**Possible Involvement of ErbB1 in the Underlying Mechanism of Lapatinib-Induced Changes in Caco-2 Intestinal Monolayer and Intervention with Recombinant Epidermal Growth Factor (rEGF)**". Throughout her MSc, she achieved notable accomplishments, including the publication of one manuscript in the Asian Journal of Andrology in 2021 and the presentation of seven posters at various conferences.

“Research is to see what everybody else has seen, and to think what nobody else has thought”.

IMMB INTERNATIONAL INTERN STUDENT



John Gregorian



My name is John Gregorian, but I prefer to go by Jack. I graduated as an undergraduate from Loyola University Maryland with a degree in forensic studies in May of 2023. Eventually I plan on getting my master's degree in entomology. During my time at Loyola University Maryland, I worked with Dr. David Rivers and Dr. Jason Carbaugh to conduct a study observing the behavior of ants on carrion. Which is actually how I came upon the opportunity to come over to Malaysia for this internship. My professor, Dr. Jason Carbaugh, was a PhD student alongside Dr. Heo at Texas A&M. He told me that he mentioned to Dr. Heo that I had begun conducting research on ant activity on carrion. He then told me that Dr. Heo had asked if I would like to come over here to conduct my research. Upon hearing this offer I was immediately on board. I'm originally from Newton, Massachusetts, but now I have traveled across the globe in order to conduct this study regarding ants and their necrophagous behavior on carrion ecology here in Malaysia. With this data, I plan on composing my first paper in which I will compare the behavior of the ants observed here to that of the ants observed in Maryland. I am going to be here at IMMB for 2 months while conducting my research. I have been interested in insects from a very young age, so I was excited to learn that I could combine both my interest in insects with my interest in forensics. My main inspiration for pursuing the field of forensic studies came from my grandmother Ann Wolbert Burgess. She is a prominent figure in the world of forensics, having assisted the FBI several times. She has inspired me to pursue forensics and has been an incredible resource for me.

GET TO KNOW STAFF : MUHAMMAD DANIEL HAKIM

ZULKEPELI



03-61265083

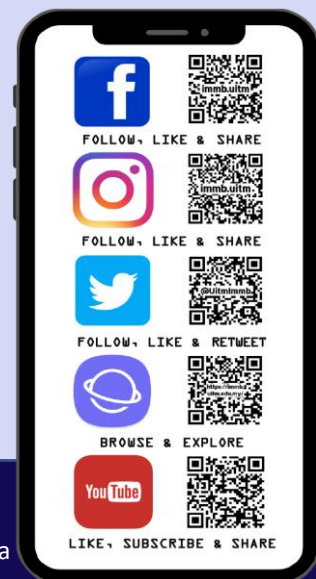


danielhakim@uitm.edu.my

Assalamualaikum and Greetings. My name is Muhammad Daniel Hakim Bin Zulkepel, also known as Daniel, Originating from Kubang Kerian, Kelantan, I have recently completed my tertiary education at UiTM Kampus Bertam, Pulau Pinang, where I specialized in Biology. This field has always captivated me, sparking a desire to learn more about living things. As a passionate and enthusiastic individual, I am dedicated to my work and strive for excellence in everything I do. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to join IMMB and Faculty of Medicine UiTM, as an employee. It is a privilege to be selected and I feel blessed to have the chance to contribute my skills to the IMMB team. I am excited to collaborate with my colleagues and work together to create a positive and productive working environment. I look forward to making valuable contributions to our organization and achieving great success together.



Scan Me



Get information on our upcoming:

International Webinar | Journal Club | Research Talk | Basic Lecture | Services | Newsletter | Online Course | Workshop and everything else that you need to know about IMMB on our media social platforms

BULLETIN 'S EDITORIAL TEAM: EDITORIAL ADVISOR – AP. DR. HEO CHONG CHIN. EDITOR IN CHIEF - MOHD YUSRI. CONTENT EDITOR – AMEER AZEEZY - SITI NUR NABILAH. COPY EDITOR - SHEZRYNA SHAHRIZAL.